

RESPONSE AND AMENDMENT

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Filing Date: September 1, 2000

Title: VIDEO GAMING SYSTEM WITH WILD CARD SYSTEM AND BONUS SYSTEM

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the step of "determining game outcomes based on the predetermined combinations of displayed game symbols and wild symbols."

The rejections also fail to disclose specific limitations of the dependent claims. For example, claim 11 recites that scatter pay symbols cannot be selected as wild symbols. That teaching is not present in the Bennett references.

Claim 9 recites a specific relationship between wild symbols in the underlying play of the game (which is not described by either Bennett reference) and the converted wild symbol. This feature is not taught by the references used in the rejection.

The Rejection of Claim 18 Under 35 USC 103(a)

The rejection of claim 18 under 35 USC 103(a) is traversed for the same reasons as claims 1-17 and 19-21 were argued as patentable over the Bennett references. This claim and its additional limitation were still rejected over only the Bennett references. Those references, even if cited under a different statute, do not teach the limitations they failed to show under 35 USC 102(e) and there is no additional reference or basis for asserting those limitations are obvious.

CONCLUSION

The above amendments and discussion have completely responded to each and every issue in the Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' Representative at the below-listed telephone number if there are any questions regarding this communication.

Respectfully submitted,
MARK L. YOSELOFF
By their Representatives,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Assistant Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on **OCTOBER** __, 2002.

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Signature

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CLEAN COPIES OF PARAGRAPHS AND AMENDED/NEW CLAIMS IN COMPLIANCE WITH 37 C.F.R. 1.121**TEXT on page 1, lines 18ff:**

B1
Wagering games, including wagering games for casino play, with multiple wagering opportunities are known. U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,861,041 and 5,078,405 (both to Jones et al.) disclose methods and apparatus for progressive jackpot gaming, respectively. The former patent discloses that a player may make an additional wager at the beginning of a hand, the outcome of the additional wager being determined by of a predetermined arrangement of cards in the player's hand. U.S. Pat. No. 4,836,553 (to Suttle and Jones) discloses a modified version of a five card stud poker game.

TEXT ON page 4, lines 20ff:

B2
U.S. Patent No. 5,980,384 describes an embodiment of the invention in which the player initiates a round of a reel slot type machine game (often referred to as a "spin" or "play") by pulling the slot machine handle or pushing a button and waiting for the reels to stop spinning. If a row of common symbols appears in the primary game, and the symbols may include wild card symbols such as Jokers, the player has a win. In variants of the primary game where there are multiple rows of symbols displayed, if a column or diagonal line of common symbols appear in the primary game, the player has a win or gains some other game advantage.

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TEXT on page 7, lines 6ff as follows:

Many video gaming systems provide wild symbols, almost always wild cards, in the play of their games. Examples of wild symbol games include, but are not limited to, U.S. Patent Nos. 6,007,066; 5,882,259; 5,823,873; 5,868,618; 5,868,619; 5,816,915 and 5,489,101.

B3 U.S. Patent No. 5,332,228 describes an improved stud poker game that requires no decisions from the player after the initial bet is placed. Each hand has one guaranteed wild card that appears at a card position which is predetermined, and shown to the player, before the player's cards are dealt. In addition to the one guaranteed wild card, all like-valued cards in the hand are also wild. Also, there are a number of novel and entertaining ways to determine the wild card position. The game is adaptable to both video play and table play formats.

U.S. Patent No. 5,308,065 describes a casino table card game where a player, after making a wager, is dealt, face-up, a hand of five cards that is placed in a player-hand area. The player also receives a solitary card, which is dealt face down in a single-card area. The player then has a chance to improve the ranking of the five-card hand by discarding up to five cards and replacing them with an equal number of new cards. After the player rearranges the five-card hand, the solitary card is turned face-up and all the cards in the player's hand that have the same face value as the solitary card are designated wild. The ranking winnings are calculated according to a statistical pay table.

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CLEAN COPY OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

1. A method of playing a video wagering game, comprising:

a player placing a wager on a reel-slot-type video game having a plurality of symbol positions; displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display, each symbol appearing in a designated symbol position;

upon the occurrence of a predetermined triggering event, randomly selecting between zero and fewer than a maximum number of viewable symbol positions as a wild symbol position;

converting each symbol displayed within each selected wild symbol position to a wild symbol; and

determining game outcomes based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols in the same game event.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the conversion of each symbol within each wild symbol position takes place one at a time.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein between one and one less than all available symbol positions are selected as wild symbol positions.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein each wild symbol is identical.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein each wild symbol morphs into a game symbol prior, after to or during the step of determining game outcomes.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein each wild symbol is wild as to all game symbols.

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7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of awarding a prize for winning outcomes.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the winning outcomes are awarded according to a look up table.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the triggering event is the appearance of two wild symbols, and wherein at least one wild symbol position is converted to a wild symbol with the same appearance as the wild symbols that triggered the bonus event.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the triggering symbol or combination of symbols comprises a symbol on both a first and fifth reel in a scatter arrangement.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein symbol positions bearing game symbols that produce scatter pays are excluded from the random selection of wild symbol positions.

12. A method of playing a video wagering game, comprising:
a player placing a wager on a reel-slot-type video game;
displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display, each symbol appearing in a designated symbol position;
upon the occurrence of a predetermined triggering event, randomly selecting at least one, and fewer than all symbol positions as [a] wild symbol positions;

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converting each symbol displayed within each selected wild symbol position to a wild symbol;

retaining wild symbols in their respective positions and randomly distributing at least some non-wild symbols into frames in the display to perform a second gaming event; and

determining game outcomes based on predetermined combinations of the displayed game symbols and wild symbols in the second gaming event.

13. An apparatus for playing a video wagering game comprising a housing, a memory system, and a monitor, the memory system directing a process comprising, not necessarily in sequence:

- a) accepting a wager on a reel-slot-type video game;
- b) displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display, each symbol appearing in a designated symbol position;
- c) upon the occurrence of a predetermined triggering event, randomly selecting at least one but fewer than all symbol positions as [a] wild symbol positions
- d) converting each symbol displayed within each selected wild symbol position to a wild symbol; and
- e) determining game outcomes based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols within a single game event.

14. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein after step b) and before step d), a game using the randomly selected game symbols on a display is resolved.

15. A method of playing a video wagering game with a bonus feature, comprising:

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a player placing a wager on a reel-slot-type video game having a plurality of symbol positions;

displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display, each symbol appearing in a designated symbol position;

addressing any winning events by a procedure selected from the group consisting of a) resolving any winning events, b) carrying any winning events forward for later resolving, and c) carrying any winning events forward for modification of the winning event by a bonus play; upon the occurrence of a predetermined triggering event for a bonus event, randomly selecting at least one and fewer than all of said plurality of symbol positions as a wild symbol position;

converting each symbol displayed within each selected wild symbol position to a wild symbol; and

determining a bonus outcome based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols within the gaming event.

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16. The method of claim 15 wherein any winning event from displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display are resolved before determining a bonus outcome based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein any winning event from displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display are resolved after determining a bonus outcome based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein any winning event from displaying a plurality of randomly selected game symbols on a display are resolved at

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about the same time as determining a bonus outcome based on the displayed game symbols and wild symbols.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the maximum number of viewable positions is 15.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein an appearance of the wild symbol changes to another game symbol at or before game outcomes are determined.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the wild symbols are wild as to fewer than all of the game symbols.